



I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as Express Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 pursuant to 37 CFR 1.10 on the date shown below as
 Express Mail Receipt No. 732685915 US
 Name: James J. Dade
 Signature: _____
 Date: January 3, 2007

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor : Masaaki Oka
 Serial No. : 10/730,881
 Filed : December 9, 2003
 Title : METHOD AND APPARATUS . . .

January 3, 2007

Mail Stop: Amendments
 Commissioner for Patents
 P.O. Box 1450
 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

S I R:

In order to comply with discretionary regulations 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98, attached hereto is a copy of Form PTO-1449 and copies of the non-US documents (if any) listed thereon. These documents contain information which the Examiner may consider to be important in deciding whether to issue a patent in the instant application.

Attached is a copy of a Communication pursuant to Article 96(2) EPC dated October 20, 2006, from corresponding European Patent Application Number 03 028 249.5-2223.

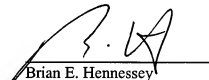
The present Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in compliance with 37 CFR 1.56 as an Examiner might consider any cited document important in deciding whether to allow the application to issue as a patent, but the citation of each document is not to be construed

as an admission that such document is necessarily relevant or prior art. No representation is intended that the cited documents represent the results of a complete search, and it is anticipated that the Examiner in the normal course of examination, will make an independent search and will determine the best prior art consistent with 37 CFR 1.104 (a), and in the course of such search will review for relevance every document cited on the attached form even if not initialed.

As this statement is filed prior to issuance of a first Office Action, no fee is due. However, any fee determined to be due with this statement maybe charged to Deposit Account 50-1290. Each item of information contained in this information disclosure statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement.

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian E. Hennessey
Reg. No. 51,271

CUSTOMER NO.: 026304
Telephone: (212) 940-8800
Fax: (212) 940-8986
DOCKET NO.: SCEP 20.778

